MAY DAY 1934

By M. EPSTEIN



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MAY FIRST, 1934

MILLIONS of workers will be marching on the streets the world over. On this historic day, the international working class holds a review of its forces; sums up its position and presents its demands to the ruling class.

The First of May is a workers' international holiday. The entire year, the worker, if he is fortunate enough to have a job, is an industrial slave. On the First of May, the worker downs his tools and joins his fellow workers in a mighty demonstration of proletarian solidarity.

The First of May has a glorious tradition of heroic resistance by the workers against the capitalists, their government and police. There is hardly a city where the police have not attempted to club the workers away from the streets on May First. Wherever the workers won the right to parade on the streets, their victory came through militant struggles and heroic sacrifices.

The leaders of the American Federation of Labor, who have turned their backs on this international labor holiday, are trying to hide the fact that the very idea of May First, as a day of struggle, originated in this country. The first convention of the A. F. of L. in 1886 proclaimed May First as the battle cry for the eight hour day. Three years later, the first Congress of the Socialist International in Paris proclaimed May First as the international day of the working class. Since then, May First is observed by all class conscious workers as a day of mobilization for the vital demands of the toiling masses for ultimate victory over capitalist exploitation and oppression.

The New Deal—Just a Raw Deal for the Workers May 1, 1934, finds the workers in this country and in this city very much agitated and aroused. After a year of the Roosevelt Administration, the economic situation of the workers is not improved, but has become even worse. The huge army of unemployed has not decreased to any considerable degree. Even the figures published by the A. F. of L. in the beginning of March, speak of nearly eleven millions totally out of work, excluding the four millions at that time on the rolls of the C.W.A. These figures give the lie to the empty boasts of the government about placing 2,700,000 workers on jobs since March 4, 1933. The C.W.A. is now being abolished.

Another denial of prosperity ballyhoo handed out by the Federal Government, are the figures given out in the annual report of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor of New York. The report speaks of a tenfold increase in the number of families dependent upon relief and charity in the past four years. Whereas in 1923, 20,000 families were on relief rolls, in 1933, 243,000 were on relief rolls; while many thousands of needy families have been denied relief.

With the C.W.A. abolished, the situation is much aggravated. 160,000 more unemployed and their families are dumped on the Home Relief Bureaus with their pitifully limited funds. What are they to do? What are all workers to do to prevent hunger for these former C.W.A. men? There is a way to prevent hunger for the C.W.A. men and for all unemployed, and this is *Unemployment and Social Insurance*.

The bill for Unemployment and Social Insurance, H. R. 7598, has been introduced in Congress. The Communist Party, which took the lead in organizing the movement for unemployed insurance, calls upon you workers, organized and unorganized, members of the A. F. of L. unions and the Socialist Party, to form one

mighty united front of struggle to force Congress to pass the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.

The Federal Government under Roosevelt is lavishly spending billions of dollars to save the banks, the railway companies, the insurance and investment companies and the rich mortgagors. Eleven and a quarter billion dollars have been given to Roosevelt by Congress for his recovery (?) plans, and the President is using these billions to boost the enormous profits of big capital to save their shaky big business. But the same Roosevelt is bitterly opposed to unemployment insurance despite the promise he gave to the unemployed during his election campaign. Roosevelt has found the forgotten man—in Wall Street.

This May Day, the workers by the tens of thousands will thunder their demand in the streets of New York for unemployment and social insurance as the only security against hunger and privation.

The N.R.A. Is on the Side of the Bosses

Now what about the employed workers? Are they well off under the protecting wings of the Blue Eagle? Have Roosevelt and his Brain Trust given them the security of a job and freedom of organization? Have the codes of "fair competition" under the N.R.A. provided them with higher wages, and increased their purchasing power?

Nearly eleven months have passed since the N.R.A. became effective. It was presented to the workers as their Saviour. Many were the benefits to be derived from the Blue Eagle; Roosevelt, the A. F. of L. and Socialist leaders promised: (1) More jobs; (2) Shorter hours; (3) Increased wages; (4) The right to organize and to belong to a union of the workers' own choosing.

What happened to all these fine promises? Have wages been increased? Have the codes been instrumental in raising the living standards of the workers? Let the facts tell the true story. In the last days of February, the N. R. A. administration called a "field day for criticism" of the codes in operation. The aim was to check the rising wave of strikes expected in spring.

Slavery Under the N.R.A. Codes

At this hearing in Washington, representatives of the Communist Party and the Trade Union Unity League revealed the fact that skilled workers in all trades had their wages slashed to the minimum provided by the code, which became the maximum scale. The unskilled workers who received small wage increases are not better off than before; on the contrary, the tremendous increase in prices of the necessities of life, brought about by the N. R. A. has more than swallowed up the small gain in wages. Prices of food stuffs alone have jumped 20 per cent from March 1933 to March 1934, according to official figures, and they are still going higher.

The workers' representatives proved that the employers organized more firmly under the N.R.A. codes and that they are waging a relentless campaign of intimidation and terror against workers who attempt to organize their own unions. The much boasted of Section 7-a of the N.R.A., which was supposed to guarantee the workers the right to belong to a union of their own choosing, has become the instrument for organizing company unions. Experienced workers are discharged and rehired as learners.

As to the "blessings" of the shorter hours, the inhuman "stretch-out" system has been speeded-up in all the industries. The employers, by terrific speed up, now squeeze out of the workers as much production in shorter hours as before in longer hours. This results in the undermining and breaking down the health of the workers.

The "field day for criticism" was accompanied by the first thunder-clap of the mighty storm that is gathering

in all industrial centers. Automobile workers in Racine and Kenosha, and in the largest plants in the Detroit area, the gas workers in Milwaukee, the coal miners in Alabama, the taxi drivers in New York, the railway workers of the Hudson & Delaware, of the Kansas City Missouri Railroad, the zinc workers and machinists in Cleveland and Toledo, the rubber workers in Akron, ship yard workers in N. Y., Pennsylvania, and many more voiced their determination to strike for the right to organize and for better conditions.

General Johnson Knows What He Is Talking About

In a supreme effort to win over the magnates of industry to deal with the A. F. of L. officials instead of putting up company unions, where the militancy of the workers is particularly great, Johnson told the assembly of 3,500 capitalist members of the codes:

"Let's not kid ourselves. Let's act before Congress acts. Let's obey the law. Call in Senator Wagner's Board. Let's get this troublesome question settled promptly and for all time. We know something about what is toward in this country—the worst epidemic of strikes in our history. Why suffer it? Here is a way out—play the game.

"I want to tell you this for your comfort. I know your problem. I would rather deal with Bill Green, John Lewis, Ed McGrady, Mike MacDonough, George Berry and a host of others I could name, than with any Frankenstein that you may build up under the guise of a company union.

"In fact, take it from me—their interests are your interests..."

Here you can see what Johnson is afraid of—"the worst epidemic of strikes in our history." That

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is why he tries to arrange close co-operation between the willing A. F. of L. leaders and the as yet stubborn industrial magnates, who insist on company unions. Johnson relies mainly on the A. F. of L. leaders to prevent and break strikes.

Roosevelt: His Deeds and His Words

The situation is so serious that Roosevelt himself stepped in. In his speech to the assembled code authorities, he appealed for shorter hours and higher wages for the workers. Roosevelt speaks sweetly but his deeds are harsh and cruel to the workers.

When Roosevelt wanted to save the banks from total collapse, he immediately went to Congress and got the necessary funds. When the insurance companies and investment houses were on the verge of closing up, he immediately "primed the pump" with a couple of billion dollars. But for war veterans, he had one present—a slash of pensions and benefits to the bone. For the unemployed, cutting relief, against insurance and abolition of the C.W.A. For the employed workers, he has a set of fine meaningless speeches, oily words to calm their anger. The manner in which Roosevelt intervened to block the strike of the auto workers and his famous "settlement" gave a legal status to company union espionage and terror.

After several months of hope and expectation, the workers are now convinced that they got a raw deal instead of a new deal and that the N.R.A. is an agency of the bosses to further drive down their standard of living.

In his testimony before the Senate hearing on his bill for compulsory arbitration under the National Labor Board of March 14th, Senator Wagner demagogically had to admit:

". . . industry (the employers) have gained prac-

tically unchallenged control of the code authority mechanism.—Wages are again lagging behind production and profit. If this disparity continues, you may expect entire collapse. In addition, employees are becoming impatient at the denial of their rights, and strikes and violence are appearing in various parts of the country."

Wagner also admitted that the N.R.A. resulted in the growth of company unions. From 432,000 workers forced into company unions in 1932 before the N.R.A., their number has increased to 1,164,000 in 1933. In other words the chains of slavery for the workers have grown heavier by 169 per cent as a result of the New Deal.

Why the A. F. of L. and Socialist Leaders Support the N.R.A.

The Roosevelt Administration could never have fastened the chains of the N.R.A. on the workers without the active support of the leadership of the A. F. of L. and the Socialist Party. The William Greens, Matthew Wolls, the Dubinskys and Hillmans, the Norman Thomases, the Louis Waldmans and the Chas. Solomons were the best agents to sell the N.R.A. to the workers. They had been loudest in praising the N.R.A. and prophesying its great benefits for the workers. Even as late as the end of February at the field day hearing in Washington, when representatives of workers of many industries laid bare all the facts of the strike breaking activities of the N.R.A., Louis Waldman, speaking in behalf of the Socialist Party and the Socialist leadership in the needle trade unions, brazenly praised the N.R.A. "as a forward piece of legislation." He only found fault here and there.

There is ample justification for the co-operation given by the Socialist leaders to the Roosevelt administration and the N.R.A. Due to the existence of the militant Needle Trade Workers Industrial Union, Steel and Metal Workers' Industrial Union, the United Shoe Workers' Union, the Food Workers' Industrial Union, the Marine Workers' Industrial Union, etc., and the opposition movement in the A. F. of L. unions, the N.R.A. in New York City has bent its efforts to line up the employers with the union leadership. The same N.R.A. administration which has written the company union codes in the automobile and steel industries has exerted pressure on the cloak and dress manufacturers in New York City to give some concessions to the A. F. of L. unions in order to check the militancy of the workers and prevent them from going over to the left wing industrial unions. It was the fear of the militant unions that compelled better codes from the N.R.A. for the cloak and dress trades than for other industries. This also accounts for the fact that the fur trade, because 95 per cent of the fur workers are members of the Industrial Union, has as yet no code.

The A. F. of L. and Socialist officials turn over every strike they lead to the N.R.A. for arbitration. This N.R.A. arbitration in every case means betrayal of the workers, company unionism and the black list. The Socialist leader Panken was the agent of the fleet owners and LaGuardia in selling out the first taxi drivers' strike. In the shoe industry the N.R.A. brought the strike breaking A. F. of L. Boot and Shoe Union forward to defeat the great militancy of the workers led by the United Shoe Workers Union. In the building trades the worst forms of racketeering are practiced by the A. F. of L. and Socialist leaders. In each case the Socialist Party give their full support to the A. F. of L. strike breakers. Socialist officials have become an official part of the N.R.A.

machinery. In their support of the Wagner Bill, Jacob Panken and Louis Waldman, Socialist leaders, openly call for outlawing the independent unions of the workers.

The Communist Party calls upon the workers to turn out into the streets by the tens of thousands this May Day to resist the N.R.A. and its codes and to demand the unconditional right to strike, picket and to be organized in unions of their own choice. For wage increases, against government regulations, and compulsory arbitration.

La Guardia Keeps His Promises to the Banks and Not to the Workers

La Guardia handed out promises right and left during the mayoralty election campaign. He paraded as a great friend of the workers, and as the enemy of the "vested interests". He had the assistance of the Socialist trade union bureaucracy which supported him. Immediately after his election, La Guardia made clear the nature of his program. The usury interest to the banks on the city loans must be paid because "of the sanctity of contracts"; but the wages of the city employees are to be cut again in order to balance the city budget. Landlords and big corporations get their taxes reduced, but firetraps of the slums cannot be removed because of lack of money.

With the cunning of an expert demagogue, Mayor La Guardia has smashed the strike of 12,000 hotel and restaurant workers and sent police to beat up their wives and children on the picket lines. The splendid strike of 25,000 taxi drivers in February was broken through his deceit and shameless maneuvers. His actions in the second strike at the end of March are still more vicious although he resorted to more demagogy. He permitted the taxi companies to import gunmen from Chicago, but he directed the mailed fist of his police department against the strikers,

who were battling for their lives. Instead of forcing the companies, who are operating under a city franchise, to grant to the drivers the right to belong to a union of their own choosing, the mayor executed a series of maneuvers aimed to split the ranks of the workers, break down their resistance and turn them over to the mercy of fleet owners. The A. F. of L. and "Socialist" union leaders, with whom La Guardia is so closely connected, not only did not protest against the police brutality, but worked with La Guardia in smashing the independent Taxicab Drivers' Union of Greater New York. Only the left wing and the Communist Party came to the aid of the militant strikers.

The workers on the subways, elevators and street car lines are kept from organizing a union by the threat of discharge, by espionage and company union terror. The subways are partly controlled by the city government. Mayor La Guardia could, if he wished to, step in and prevent the I.R.T. and B.M.T. from denying to the workers the elementary right of organization. But La Guardia will not raise a finger in behalf of the workers except to slash their wages. But at the same time, he is the bosom friend of the Socialist Party and A. F. of L. leaders.

La Guardia Fights to Abolish Many City Jobs But Keeps the Fire Traps

Forty-four people, among them eighteen children, have perished in fires in the slum dwellings in this city during the past 4 months. These 44 workers and their families are victims of the most brutal and criminal negligence on the part of the city and the federal governmens.

The owners of the slums are not ordinary small-fry landlords. The slums are the properties of Vincent Astor, a close friend of Roosevelt, Vanderbilt, Blanchford, Hamilton Fish—anti-Soviet baiter, etc. The fire-traps bring in

ample profits to these wealthy aristocrats. They are not interested in razing the slums and investing money to put up modern fire-proof houses. Roosevelt is spending billions of dollars but not for housing. Mayor La Guardia is rushing to Washington for money to finance several huge projects, tunnels and bridges, but not for housing. Fully 670,000 working class families are housed in slum tenements.

But don't think that the mayor is not doing anything to improve the "housing for the poor". He appointed a committee. One of the members of the committee is B. Charney Vladeck, business manager of the yellow Socialist Daily Forward. You workers leave it to Vladeck. He is a worthy companion to La Guardia in demagogy and betrayals.

The Communist Party calls upon you workers to thunder your demand in the ears of La Guardia this May First. Abolish the fire-traps. Clear away the slums. The criminal deaths and slum fires must be stopped!

A Raw Deal for the Negro Masses

That the Negro masses are not better off under the New Deal is admitted even by the misleaders of the Negro people and the politicians of the N.A.A.C.P. At the field day hearing of the N.R.A. in Washington, Comrade Henry Shepard revealed the true picture of the discrimination, persecutions and Jim-crowism against the Negro toilers in the South and the North under the N.R.A. The few social workers present at the hearing had to substantiate Comrade Shepard's accusations. The codes were instrumental in causing a wholesale lay-off of Negro workers due to the slight increase in wages for low-paid workers. The employers could hire white workers and thus further split the ranks of the working class. The same happened in the shops when Negro workers re-

mained. Discrimination, lower wages and Jim-crowism are daily occurrences in shops belonging to unions under the control of the A. F. of L. and Socialist leaders. There are cases where bosses are beating up Negro girls in dress shops; of Negro workers receiving lower pay for equal work. Complaints of discharged Negro workers are brutally brushed aside by union officials. Only in the shops belonging to the Industrial Unions and to the militant and independent unions do the Negro workers receive equal treatment. The New Deal has brought a new fiendish wave of lynching, police attack, frame-ups and anti-Negro incitement.

The constant discrimination against the Negro workers by the Home Relief Bureaus, by the C.W.A., by the P.W.A. are known to every Negro worker in this city. There is terrible overcrowding, there is more hunger and misery in Harlem and in other Negro sections than anywhere else in this city. Negro children suffer from lack of food and lack of clothes. The city government, the Negro politicians are not doing anything to alleviate the hunger and misery of the Negro toilers and their families.

The A. F. of L. and Socialist leaders support the white ruling terror against the Negro people. They help carry through the chief policy of the ruling class to divide the workers; to set white against colored; native against foreign-born in order to exploit and oppress all workers.

The Communist Party is the only one that fights for the vital needs of the Negro masses and for their rights as an oppressed nationality. The Communist Party is waging a relentless campaign against the anti-Negro bosses' ideas of white superiority in its ranks and among the working class. The Communist Party and International Labor Defence were successful in arousing the workers of the

world to the defense of the nine Scottsboro boys. Equal rights for the Negro workers and unity of white and Negro in their common struggle is one of the fundamental points in the program of the Communist Party. Demonstrate this May Day against lynching, Jim-crowism and discrimination, for equal rights for Negroes.

Fight Against War and Fascism— Defend the Soviet Union

Every worker who follows events in this country and abroad, can see clearly the danger of a new Imperialist war that is hovering over us. Roosevelt makes speeches about good-will among nations; but at the same time, he puts through colossal appropriations for a navy, "second to none". Many additional hundreds of millions of dollarsthe Vinson-Trammell Bill-were granted by Congress for building up the navy. Larger funds were also given for the army, for the air fleet and for developing new, deadly weapons. The Roosevelt government started a new mad budgets of all the Imperialist governments for war purposes have increased tremendously. The Nazis in Germany are feverishly arming their storm troops. Hitler is threatening the Soviet Union in the West. New military alliances are springing up in Europe. The Disarmament Conference is a farce. In the Far East, Imperialist Japan is preparing for an attack against the Soviet Union.

The war plans of the bosses are aimed mainly at the land of Socialism, the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union there is and can be no crisis, no unemployment. The Soviet Union is the only country where there is a job and security for all workers. It is the only country where the wages, the living and cultural standards of the workers are getting better all the time. In the Soviet Union the workers are building a new Socialist life. New Socialist

cities, new giant Socialist industries and a Socialist agriculture are springing up. The Soviet Union is the only country in the world that is fighting stubbornly for peace, for complete and total disarmament. The Soviet Union is the great inspiration of all workers. It points the way to the masses all over the world how to get rid for good and all of their misery; how to finally end crises, unemployment, misery, wage cuts and terror by destroying the capitalist system, by building a workers' government-by establishing the Soviet power! The dictatorship of the working class is the only true democracy for the masses. Capitalist democracy means police clubs, jails, strike-breaking terror and fascism. The workers' dictatorship in the Soviet Union means a new Socialist life, it means the workers running and controlling their own government, their own factories, shops, mills and mines, building their own Socialist future. The Soviet union proves that the only way out—is the way of the Communists—the revolutionary way of struggle against capitalism, for Socialism.

The Capitalists Are Driving Towards Fascism

At the same time, the capitalist rulers, in mortal fear for their shaky power, are resorting to open fascism as their last resort against the oncoming revolutionary struggle of the toilers. Fascism has gained a victory in Germany and Austria, due to the treachery and to the splitting tactics of the Social-Democratic leaders. In this country, the ruling class is not depending entirely upon vague promises and false illusions that Roosevelt in handing out so freely to the workers and farmers. Along with these promises, are the fascist tendencies which are clearly coming to the forefront in the policies of the Roosevelt administration. The concentration of power in the hands of the President, the various governmental agencies and boards for regulation and control that have been put up

under the New Deal, the N.R.A. and its code authorities—the A.A.A., the compulsory arbitration law which the National Labor Board is trying to put through Congress, these point out the fascist road along which the capitalists of this country and their government are travelling. There are a few hundred fascist organizations in this country under various names but with one common aim, the inauguration of a fascist regime like the one in Germany and in Italy. The fascist regime is necessary for the capitalists to tighten their grip upon the working class and with terror and murder to maintain their bankrupt system of exploitation and oppression. The capitalists rely on fascist terror to crush resistance to their bloody war plans.

Only a united working class can successfully defeat the fascist plans of the capitalists. Only a united working class can prevent the approaching Imperialist war. Only a united working class can defend the Soviet Union.

The Working Class Can and Must Have Unity

Unity is now the burning need of the workers. The Communist Party has repeatedly addressed itself to the leadership of the A. F. of L. and of the Socialist Party with proposals and urgent appeals for a united front based on the minimum demands of the workers. All proposals and appeals were rejected. William Green, Matthew Woll and the other chiefs of the A. F. of L., do not want unity among the workers, because they do not want the workers to fight for their vital needs. They are cogs in the state apparatus of the capitalists, they are part and parcel of the present system of private property and exploitation. All they do is to prevent the workers under their influence from fighting for better conditions.

Norman Thomas, Louis Waldman and the other Socialist leaders do not want unity among the workers be-

cause this would mean class struggle and these gentlemen are against class struggle. Although they differ in phrases with the chiefs of the A. F. of L., the Socialist leaders are actively engaged in the same class collaboration policy of the William Greens and Matthew Wolls. The Socialist leaders will gladly join efforts with the reactionary labor leaders but under no circumstances will they permit their members to join with the Communist and left wing workers in struggle against the dangers now facing them.

Unity, therefore, must come from below, from the workers themselves. Unity must be forged in the joint battles of the class struggle waged by the workers regardless of political party and union affiliations. In the shop strikes, on the picket lines, in demonstrations of the unemployed, and the protests against fascist terror, the campaign against war and for the defense of the Soviet Union, the workers must find the unity that is the corner-stone for the successful struggle against the capitalists.

May Day is the traditional day of the greatest unity and solidarity of all workers in struggle for our vital needs, against the capitalists. One mighty united front demonstration of the New York workers will strike terror into the hearts of the bosses. It will force concessions from the capitalists and their government.

Fight in your shops, in your union, in your organization for the united front of struggle of the whole working class this May Day. Pour out into the streets in mighty display of proletarian solidarity. Sweep aside all those who prevent the unity of the working class on the great day of working class struggle! Organize in your shops, unions and organizations for participation in the great united front May Day demonstration of the New York workers.

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